

Dear Commissioners:

Stop hidden phone fees so I can truly compare prices of phone services. I support the petition filed by the National Association of State Utility Consumer Advocates and endorsed by other consumer advocacy organizations. CG Docket No. 04-208, Petition for Declaratory Ruling Regarding Truth-In-Billing and Billing Format, is long overdue.

Phone bills should be truthful and easy to understand. It should be a no-brainer to the FCC as to why phone bills (or any bill for that matter) should be truthful and easy to understand. My main concern about complicated bills relates to the elderly who were raised in times when things were more simple. Now they have to deal with trying to decipher complicated bills with frustration. I guarantee the average household, especially those with elderly and those with learning disabilities, end up paying more for goods and services because companies make it so complicated to understand exactly what it is your paying for. This is a version of stealing in my opinion and any company who takes part in it should be prosecuted.

Because this practice is tolerated by the FCC, long distance and wireless phone companies are able to hide the true cost of service. These add-ons make the advertised price of service significantly less than the amount of the check I have to write each month to pay the bill. Competition will not work if consumers cannot accurately compare prices when shopping for service.

Many states are stepping up to address this problem. They should be allowed to proceed. However, the FCC shouldn't shirk its responsibility, nor limit states from doing more.

The FCC should immediately grant the NASUCA petition to investigate billing practices, and prohibit phone and wireless companies from imposing separate monthly fees, line items or surcharges unless expressly mandated by law or the charge is expressly authorized by a governmental authority.